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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 DHA-05 IO-14 SSO-00 SS-15
L-03 NSCE-00 H-02 EB-08 AGRE-00 FDRE-00 TRSE-00
OMB-01 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 COME-00 EUR-12 INRE-00
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O R 291510Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANJUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4633
INFO USUN NEW YORK 127
AMEMBASSY DAKAR

UNCLAS BANJUL 1206

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/W AND AFR/SFWA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM EAID GA
SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS: GAMBIAN ATTORNEY GENERAL'S US VISIT

REF: A) BANJUL 1127, B) BANJUL 1197

1. SUMMARY - CITING UGANDAN "ATROCITIES," THE GAMBIA IS URGING CREATION OF COMMONWEALTH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES ARE AMONG INTERESTS OF ATTORNEY GENERAL MUHAMADU LAMIN SAHO DURING CURRENT US VISIT TO DISCUSS GAMBIAN FOOD ASSISTANCE REQUEST. END SUMMARY.

2. RADIO GAMBIA IS GIVING PROMINENT COVERAGE TO PROPOSAL MADE BY ATTORNEY GENERAL SAHO AT JUST-CONCLUDED COMMONWEALTH LAW MINISTER'S CONFERENCE IN WINNIPEG FOR CREATION OF COMMONWEALTH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. CALLING HUMAN RIGHTS A CENTRAL CONCERN OF GAMBIAN INTERNAL AND DOMESTIC POLICY, SAHO REPORTEDLY STATED THAT "CURRENT ATROCITIES BEING CARRIED OUT IN A MEMBER COUNTRY--UGANDA--
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WERE TOO SERIOUS AND BASIC A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO BE IGNORED." HE PROPOSED CREATION OF WORKING GROUP REPRESENTATIVE OF COMMONSEALTH MEMBERSHIP TO DRAFT INSTRUMENT LAYING OUT COMMISSION'S FUNCTIONS AND MEMBER NATIONS' RESPONSIBILITIES IN AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS. COMMISSION WOULD BE DESIGNED TO FOSTER ATMOSPHERE OF AWARENESS AND SET OFFICIAL STANDARDS TO SUPPORT PEOPLES

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AFFECTED BY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. SAHO CALLED FOR FINAL RATIFICATION OF DRAFT AGREEMENT BEFORE 1979 COMMON-WEALTH LAW MINISTERS' MEETING.

3. DURING AUG 29 COURTESY CALL BY CHARGE, SECRETARY GENERAL OF GAMBIA GOVERNMENT ERIC CHRISTENSEN SAID BODY ENVISAGED BY GAMBIA WOULD BE ALONG LINES OF EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. HE STRESSED IMPORTANCE WHICH PRESIDENT JAWARA ATTACHES TO OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND SAID HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES MIGHT BE AMONG THOSE RAISED WITH USG BY ATTORNEY GENERAL DURING US VISIT (ANTICIPATED BY REFTEL A) TO DISCUSS GAMBIA FOOD ASSISTANCE REQUEST.

4. NEITHER SECRETARY GENERAL NOR ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE HAS HIS CURRENT TRAVEL SCHEDULE, THOUGH HE WAS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN NEW YORK AUG 28 BEFORE TRAVELLING TO WASHINGTON. PARTICULARLY IN WAKE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL'S INITIATIVE AT WINNIPEG, BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE FOR HIM TO MEET WITH DEPARTMENT OF STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COORDINATOR DERIAN AND/OR OTHERS CONCERNED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS IF TIME PERMITS DURING HIS WASHINGTON VISIT. MCKEAE

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Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
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